



He Who Hesitates, Loses.

By Aaron Crowley

A man and his three sons worked behind horses, plows, and pick axes clearing land on a farm deep in Indian country on the Kentucky Frontier.

Bang!

The three boys turned at the sound to see their dad crumple to the ground.

The youngest son Tom rushed to his father's side only to look up into the eyes of an Indian standing over him with a smoking rifle in one hand, a raised tomahawk in the other.

Bang!

The man who murdered the father fell to the ground beside him.

On the wild, lawless frontier in the early 1800's, one acted fast. The alternative was an early death. Thanks to the actions of that man's oldest son, who grabbed the family rifle and quickly fired, the life of the youngest son Thomas Lincoln was preserved.

Had he hesitated, the course of human history would have been forever altered.

A generation later through the decisive actions of Thomas Lincoln's own son Abraham,
President Abraham Lincoln, the life of our *nation* was preserved.

Like the life his dad and uncles knew on the frontier a generation before so it was during the Civil War; action or inaction, decision or indecision, life or death.

Over 600,000 met death on the battlefields of The Civil War. And thanks to the decisive action taken by President Lincoln, there were millions of lives saved and millions of freed slaves.

While business management is laughably insignificant when compared to the realities of war time leadership, the historical accounts of decision makers good and bad, is relevant and instructive.

At the battle of Antietam, General George B McClellan, the CEO of the Union Army defeated General Lee's outnumbered troops and forced them to retreat across the Potomac River in defeat.

General Lee and his exhausted men collected their thoughts and caught their breath, fully expecting an onslaught of well rested, well supplied reserves to follow them across the river to finish the job.

Inexplicably, McClellan delayed, letting a decisive moment in human history fade away like smoke in the wind. Choosing to wait until the next morning to pursue the Confederates, he gave Lee the green light to escape to fight another day. His hesitation prolonged the war that tragically took hundreds of thousands of more lives.

Like a commander in battle, a business leader under fire must take action and avoid waffling indecision at all costs.

While life itself may not be on the line, the livelihoods of everyone involved in the business depend on it.

So as this year of years in the stone industry draws to a close, may this tumultuous time find you more like Lincoln and less like McClellan, because, he who hesitates loses.